



BELLEVILLE - AREA INDEPENDENT

Vol. 32.22 Thursday, May 28, 2026

Serving the Communities of Belleville, Sumpter and Van Buren

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Photo courtesy of Andrew Mills

Belleville High School eighth graders took a trip to Washington, D.C. May 13-17 to get acquainted with the nation's capitol. They posed for a picture holding the Independent and gathered around the statue of Albert Einstein. The staff chaperones were trip coordinator Andrew Mills, Paige Fordice, Andrew Kozelka, Madison Dagenais, Jordan Webb, and Samantha Tanana.

VBT approves 15-yr. tax exemptions for Google data center

By Rosemary K. Oztman
Independent Editor

The Van Buren Township Board of Trustees unanimously approved a 50% tax exemption for 15 years for Google's new 1 gigawatt data center.

The action was taken more than three hours after the May 19 meeting started.

There was an overflow crowd in the meeting room and more people across the hall watching proceedings on a TV tuned into the township's channel 12.

Five separate motions were approved after lots of public comment. First was an hour-long public hearing comment session during which 25 people spoke, each for 3

minutes or less.

After that, supervisor McNamara gave a presentation "in my own way" on the issue. He said he wrote it out in advance. He said they keep getting the same questions and the answers have been given.

He said the property was rezoned Industrial in 2005. He said in 2018, the township

had workshops where the township asked residents what they wanted their township to look like, including where would they would like data centers and they said in Industrial, which is the highest, most-intensive use.

He said the state of Michigan has extreme

(continued on page 13)

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SECOND FRONT PAGE

10 outdoor sculptures leased for a year by Belleville, VBT DDAs



“Atometry” by Michael Magnotta, \$15,000, at the Quirk Road triangle in Van Buren Township.



“Bass” by Michael Magnotta, \$15,000, at Chase Bank



By Richard Alan Studios at Belle Tire



“Great Lakes” by Michael Magnotta, \$21,000, VBT hall



“Cosmos” by Michael Magnotta, \$19,000, at library



“Thalia” by Gregory Mendez, \$8,500 at Harris Park



“Pollinator” by Kirk Seese, \$14,000, at Five Points



“Blue Beginnings” by Kelly O'Neill, \$3,500, at city entry sign



“Frozen in Time” by Richard Morgan, \$7,500 at Secretary of State



“Trojan Ocarina” by Judith Greavu, \$12,000 at McDonalds

Independent photos by
James Otzman

OPINIONS

Editorial

Neighbors oppose Waverly plan in Van Buren Twp.

The plan to build 92 single-family homes on a golf course and to add 277 more multiple-dwellings next door as well is not setting well with neighbors.

The neighbors to the Waverly Apartments were invited to a meeting at the Van Buren Township hall on May 14 to see the plans and to comment.

And comment they did. They are still commenting and gathering up the proof needed to show this is not legal. The original apartment complex was built in 1973-74 and the township let it have greater density because of the golf course amenity.

What's especially rankling is that Van Buren Township officials can't find the documents from that time that show the deal. There are other ways to get to the truth and those pathways are being pursued.

The owners of quiet lakeside property in that neighborhood are not going to let their home life be turned upside down by a plan they say is downright illegal.

*To build a better world,
start in your own community*

EXTRA THINGS I KNOW

...By Rosemary K. Otzman

Aiden Dornbos, age 18, a Belleville High School senior who was commanding officer of the BHS JROTC and due to graduate in a few days, was killed in a Saturday vehicle crash near Pinconning. He reportedly was in the back seat and died instantly.

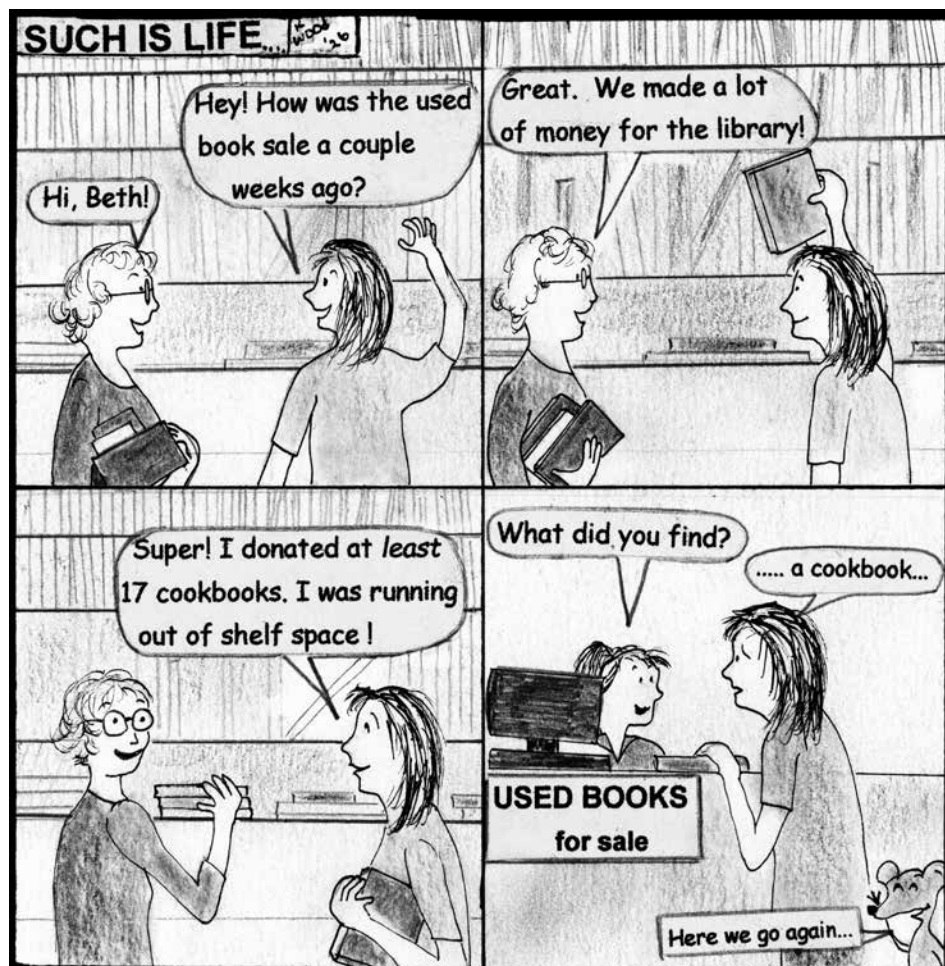
Reportedly, Aiden was locked into a position in the Navy's competitive nuclear program after graduation.

His life was celebrated at Monday's parade and Memorial Day ceremony in Belleville.

Aiden's family is running a fundraiser to earn funds for his funeral. Meanwhile, the police are investigating the crash.

The whole community opens its arms to the young man who had yet to spread his wings as an adult. Our love to his grieving family and friends.

My brother Anthony Stephen Kuchta, also died Saturday, May 23, in Fort Pierce, FL, at the age of 95 after a two-week illness. He was able to live a long and productive life, with eight children, a high job at Ford Motor Co., with pleasure trips and assignments all around the world with his wife Mary Lee. She passed on a few years ago. At BHS, he was a debater and football captain and graduated in the class of 1949. She was head of the cheerleaders and they married in 1950 when she was a senior. She was a gifted secretary, helping him all of her life. May they rest in peace. An obituary is on the way.



The work to demolish Haggerty Elementary School has begun with the temporary and permanent parts of the fencing put up first. They put black plastic along the east side of the front temporary fencing so people couldn't see in, I guess. Well, some of those prevailing west winds blew some of the plastic off and part of the cyclone fence fell down. They fixed it by reinstalling the black plastic on the east side of the fence again. The first time the wind blew from the west, through the holes in the fencing and couldn't get through the plastic, so it ripped it out. Sure to happen again at his

Traffic in the city of Belleville had been horrible with North Liberty Street being worked on, as well as the railroad crossing closed down at Haggerty south of the I-94 Service, and roadwork on Belleville Road and South I-94 Service Drive. Now, Liberty is done (except for the striping), the railroad track is open (with quite a bounce now over the track), and the Service Drive is nice and smooth.

Hopefully, the traffic will thin out downtown.

It was interesting that at the last Belleville DDA meeting, in the middle of all these detouring vehicles in the city's downtown, DDA members talked about ways to get more people to come to town.

We got a tip that workers were removing tanks that had been on the property at the railroad tracks on Denton Road, north of Ecorse for many years. That project had

been discussed at the VBT board meeting a while back. Supervisor McNamara said they had considered putting in a park there for the Denton neighborhood, but decided it was too close to the railroad tracks for children to play there. We're glad they are cleaning it up. We've heard word they have thought of a new site for a Denton park.

Romulus finally re-dedicated its Veterans Memorial on Memorial Day. It was taken down in 2018 after construction started on the new courthouse and the pieces and bricks with veterans' names on them were stored away. The city has been working on the new site for a year or so and, finally, announced its re-dedication. It's at the entry drive to the 34th District Court and Romulus City Hall on Wayne Road. And, it is lovely.

Now, if Belleville can work on keeping its Veterans Memorial from falling into the lake, that will be great. We understand a committee is at work to keep it safe.

The artwork on page 3 of today's paper was installed in the city of Belleville and Van Buren Township on May 19 and will be up for a year. The art objects, which are for sale, are leased from the Midwest Sculpture Initiative and the lease paid for by the city and township Downtown Development Authorities.



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- Support local schools, churches, and non-profit institutions by raising awareness of their activities in the local community; and
- Provide a newspaper of record for local municipal bodies.

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Letters

Thanks to all who helped with clean-up

To the editor:

On May 16, VFW Post 4434 and PLAV Post 167 hosted a Clean-Up Day. I had put out a call for an assist from the community and boy did we get a good response! We got a lot done, including the cut back of overgrown brush and trees, rebuilt the rear porch, cleaned out the garage, did touch-up painting on the Howitzer, retired hundreds of flags, and cleaned the interior of the building.

Members from the posts were assisted by Boy Scout troop 793 and Cub Scout Pack 793. From the community we were joined by a large contingent of BYC members and a few family and outside volunteers.

VFW members included: George Kennedy, Dave Bauer, Stan Pikula, Pete Pitzen, Tom Publinski, Tony Spellman, Geof Bush, and Lori Day.

Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts included Misty Myers, Martin Church, Stephen Barrett, Anna Hill, Kistin Howard, Kay Ann Carlson, Candace Sewell, Joshua Post.

From BYC we had Chris Donley, Mike Hawkins, Janine Hawkins, John Cerone, Rhonda Cerone, Bret Barry, Colleen Holder, and Pete Laframboise.

Other community and family members included Angie Kennedy, George Allen Kennedy Jr., Steven Cowen, and Joe Harper.

Many, many thanks to all who responded to our call to assist. We deeply appreciate all who came out and volunteered their time to help restore and beautify our post so we may also proudly share this gem with the community.

Gratefully,

Lori Day

PLAV member, Building Manager

VBT being eaten away by over-development

To the editor:

Re: the Waverly Housing Proposal

I have been a resident of Van Buren Township for 32 years and live just off Denton Road past the cemetery. It has been a blessing in disguise having the Denton bridge closed. People are out walking and biking, holding block parties, and the like.

There are no cars screeching around the L bend and running the two stop signs, no teenagers racing each other home from school, and no booming stereos at 3 a.m. That will, of course, all return when the bridge is finally open. Adding multiple homes will not only increase the traffic issues, but will continue to add to the deterioration of Denton Road, which is in constant need of repair.

The township's greatest attraction used to be its undeveloped areas. It was one of the reasons people moved here from overcrowded and over-developed areas. Today, the township's greatest asset is continuously being eaten away by industry and over-development. I am not a tree-hugger (although there is nothing wrong with being one). But I can predict the damage this development will do to the environment. Take a look at the land now being used as dumping sites and landfills for trash coming from outside the township.

The area for the proposed houses by the Waverly Apartment complex is home to wild turkeys, which were once an endangered species in Michigan, and are still tracked and counted by the state. It is also home to bald eagles, osprey, Cooper's hawks, meadow orioles, fox, deer, and many other animals and plants too numerous to list here.

Where is the compulsion to destroy untouched land coming from? Why is it necessary to build up every square inch of the township, and destroy one of its greatest resources?

Diane L. Marion

Van Buren Township

Birthdays

May 29 – Jeff Kotlarek
June 1 – Nathan Millard
June 3 – Shawnee Lawson
June 4 – John Juriga
June 5 – William Millard

Do you or does someone you know have a birthday soon? Call the *Independent* and we will publish it as soon as possible.

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On April 16, Jim Wagner delivered 700 food items from the Van Buren Eagles #3996 located at 9961 Beck Rd. to the Emergency Food Closet located at Belleville First United Methodist Church, 417 Charles St. From Feb. 9 to April 9, a competition was held between the men and the women to see who could collect the most food. The women won 425 to 275. Eight Food Closet volunteers were ready to sort, date check, and store the food items which they did in 40 minutes.

Things to do in the Belleville area...

- **Thursday, May 28** – “Lost Film and Media,” a lecture by Tyler Moll, is from 6-7 p.m. at the Belleville Area Museum, 405 Main St., with free pizza at 5:30 p.m. To save a seat email bam@vbtmi.gov or call (734) 697-1944.
- **Thursday, May 28** – The Southwestern Wayne (County) Democratic Club’s May membership meeting is at 6 p.m. in the Sheldon/Otisville Room located in the Van Buren Township Hall, 46425 Tyler Rd., Van Buren Township.
- **Friday, May 30** – Euchre Social Fundraiser from 4-11 p.m. to benefit Michigan Against Atomic Waste non-profit organization. At Van Buren Eagles, 9961

Beck Rd. Pork chop dinner is \$20. Euchre has \$40 suggested donation.

- **Wednesday, June 3** – At 7 p.m. Michigan Flight Museum presents Book Talk: “Yankee Lady -- Remembering an Icon.” Photographer Kurt Affholter will introduce his new coffee table book featuring images of the Yankee Lady in unique and memorable settings. He also will present air-to-air images of rare World War II aircraft set against dramatic backdrops, exploring each aircraft’s history. Entry is \$10 per person for non-members and free to museum members with registration. Museum is at 47884 D St., Van Buren Township, (734) 483-4030.

- **Saturday, June 6** – Civic Duty Education Day, 1-3 p.m., Fourth Street Place in Belleville. Meet elected officials, raffle giveaway for PS5, face painting and balloon twisting, animals. Sponsored by Survivors Speak, SOOAR, and Belleville

DDA.

- **Tuesday, June 9** – An event to honor people’s pets that have died will begin at 6:30 p.m. at Horizon Park, hosted by David C. Brown Funeral Home. Bring pictures and/or keepsakes of your beloved pets and faithful companions you have lost.

- **Saturday, June 13** – Kids Fishing Derby from 10 a.m. to noon at Banotai Park, 24598 Sherwood Rd., Sumpter Township. No

fishing license required (State free-fishing weekend). Ages 17 and under. Awards at noon.

- **Friday, June 26** – Red Cross Blood Drive, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Denton Faith United Methodist Church, 6020 Denton Rd., Van Buren Township. Sign up for donation at the June 26 event by calling the church at (734) 483-2276 during office hours from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Monday or Thursday.

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Obituaries



Joe "Squeaky" Kulik

JOE 'SQUEAKY' KULIK

(June 24, 1947 – May 16, 2026)

Joe "Squeaky" Kulik, age 78, passed away on Saturday, May 16, 2026, surrounded by the love of his family. Joe was born on June 24, 1947, and will be remembered not only for his accomplishments, but for the kind of person he was to everyone around him.

Joe was the beloved husband of Sandi Kulik for 60 years and a proud father to Jeff Kulik (Paula) and Jody Kulik (Kirsten). He was a loving grandfather to Destinee, Jacob, Chase, and Skye, and great-grandfather to Aireeyona, Kannin and Kendall, all of whom brought tremendous joy to his life.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Friday, June 5, from 4 P.M. to 10 P.M. at the Van Buren Eagles, 9961 Beck Road, Belleville, MI 48111. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions in Joe's name may be made to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation <https://www.cff.org/donate>. To view a full obituary, to leave a memory you have of Joe or to sign his guestbook please visit www.rbhfsaline.com.

Public meeting set for US Ecology Romulus hazardous waste license

The Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes, and Energy (EGLE), will host a virtual public information meeting on the US Ecology Romulus Inc. (USE ROM), Hazardous Waste Management Facility Operating License Application at 6 p.m., Thursday, May 28.

USE ROM submitted an application in accordance with Part 111, Hazardous Waste Management, of Michigan's Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended, and the administrative rules promulgated thereunder.

USE ROM is currently permitted to store a variety of hazardous waste in tanks and containers and to treat those wastes in tanks located at 36345 Van Born Rd., Romulus. No new operations were proposed in the application.

To attend the online meeting, register at <https://bit.ly/MMD052826>.

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. If you do not have internet access and would like to join by PHONE ONLY, please use the following phone number: 855-758-1310 and use meeting ID: 823 3261 9871#. Pre-registration is not required to attend. Individuals interested in participating can click the link above at the start of the event (6 p.m.).

The agenda is: 6 p.m., presentations by EGLE staff and 6:20 p.m., panel question and answer session.

The public is encouraged to review the application for more detailed information before commenting.

Comments on the application may be made at any time in these ways:

- By email: EGLE-MMD-HWS@Michigan.gov.

- By U.S. mail: EGLE, Materials Management Division, Attn: Halima Salah, P.O. Box 30241, Lansing, MI 48909-7741.

If you have questions about the application, contact Halima Salah at (517) 299-6196, SalahH@Michigan.gov or EGLE-MMD-HWS@Michigan.gov.

Brown Funeral Home to host June 9 memorial service for loss of pet

David C. Brown Funeral Home will host a Service of Love and Remembrance for Loss of a Pet and Faithful Companion at 6:30 p.m., Tuesday, June 9, at Horizon Park in Belleville.

Those participating are asked to bring pictures and/or keepsakes of beloved pets that have died.

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Belleville DDA working on call for proposals for hardware store

By Rosemary K. Otzman
Independent Editor

At the May 20 meeting of the Belleville Downtown Development Authority, DDA member Phil Miller explained that the committee formed to deal with the former hardware store the DDA owns is working on a draft of a RFP (request for proposals).

Miller said the DDA legal counsel is helping them and they hope to have the RFP finalized to present at the next DDA meeting on June 17.

"Finally, it isn't going to be the worst problem we have," Miller said of the long-vacant hardware store.

DDA vice chairman Chris Donley, who was presiding at the meeting in the absence of chairman John Winter, said he is hoping it will turn out to be other than a service-based business.

Miller said they have to pay attention to the zoning ordinance and can't deny anything that's allowed in there.

At the end of the meeting, Miller said the committee had some good conversations on the "Wherehouse," which used to be the hardware store. He said he appreciated that people were able to reconsider their ideas.

The DDA convened May 20 with a bare quorum of five – Donley, Miller, Sabrina Richardson-Williams, mayor Ken Voigt and Valerie Kelley-Bonner -- with four members absent: John Winter, Denise Baker, Mike Gatteri and Whitney Beaubien.

In other business at the 55-minute meeting, the DDA:

- Discussed the DDA Director position and took no action. Present director Steve Jones said he is staying on as the interim city manager until the city budget is done. Miller said the compensation for a full-time or part-time director needs to be put in the DDA budget ahead of time;

- Heard Donley say some of the things on the follow-up list that are ongoing projects should be taken off the list to tighten it up. He said there should just be projects on the list that the DDA is actively working on. Jones said he had removed many items from the list to shorten it, but he could do what Donley wanted, as well;

- Heard treasurer Richardson-Williams question the work of the Goodbye Geese company, since she said she still sees geese in Victoria Commons and hasn't seen the company at work there. The DDA voucher list to be approved was paying the April charge of \$870 each for Village Park and Horizon Park, for a total of \$1,740. Jones said the company comes at different times of the day and at different locations. Also, once the chicks are hatched, the geese don't go anywhere until they are big enough to leave;

- Heard Kelley-Bonner report on the June 16 Civic Duty Education Day the DDA is helping to sponsor from 1-3 p.m. at Fourth Street Place outside the Belleville Area District Library. Survivors Speak is putting on the event, supported by SOOAR. People will be able to meet elected officials, get snacks, get faces painted, see the animals brought by the Creative Teacher, and take

part in a Play Station-5 giveaway;

- Heard Kelley-Bonner also report she was working on the "You Matter, Belleville" project on suicide awareness in November. She has ordered 100 flyers for downtown businesses;

- Heard Miller ask Jones about the status of the EV charging stations. Jones said it was an ongoing project and at the end of last week he finally got ahold of somebody. He said DTE is part of the holdup, but there are disagreements with how it was going to be done. He said he was assured it would be done. He said it has been a year that the units in the library parking lot have been in place and it's been three years since they started the process. There are four sets of EV stations planned: library parking lot/new city hall, Village Park, Victory Park, and Liberty Street parking lot;

- Was informed there is a draft of the DDA

budget but unresolved issues will affect the figures and it will be a living document;

- Heard Donley announce that 207 Belleville High School senior banners arrived that day and volunteers are expected to put them up on May 21. These will be up for three weeks and then the other half of the banners will be up for three weeks;

- Heard Donley describe online projects to draw people downtown. He said an idea Miller had about artists bringing artworks downtown according to themes, the way Miller had seen it work in California, is a good idea. But, he said it would take "a group to get it off the ground and an army of volunteers"; and

- Heard Richardson-Williams compliment Donley for the Wings of Hope sculpture recently erected in Horizon Park. Donley said the sculpture was his idea in memory

of Harper Mathis, the teen who died of brain cancer, but the credit goes to the family and the foundation that supported it once he brought his idea to them. He said he recently saw the sculpture from the lake and it was shining and beautiful.

More Letters

Thank you, St. Jude

To the editor:

Thank you, St. Jude, for answering my prayers. I believe in you.

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus, be adored, glorified, loved and preserved throughout the world now and forever, Sacred Heart of Jesus, pray for us. St. Jude, worker of miracles, pray for us. St. Jude, keeper of the hopeless, pray for us.

Thank you, St. Jude.
C.P. of Wayne

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Independent photo by James Oztman
Work continues on the new Chick-fil-A restaurant on Belleville Road. This photo was taken May 22.



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On April 28, the Charles B. Cozadd Rotary Foundation presented a grant of \$20,000 to Marilyn Wood of the Emergency Food Closet at the Belleville First United Methodist Church, 417 Charles St., Belleville. The grant will help sustain the Emergency Food Closet through the end of 2026. David Parrott, president of the board of directors of the Rotary Foundation, said the foundation is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational and scientific purposes, and for making distributions to tax-exempt organizations primarily in the tri-community area for such purposes. Grant applications can be found on the Belleville Rotary Club's website. From left are secretary/treasurer Keith Bruder; president Parrott; Food Closet coordinator Wood; directors Ray Eissinger, Elena Manalp, John Juriga, and Judge Lisa Martin; and vice-president Rachel Kozlowski.

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Photo courtesy of Elena Manalp, VBT communications dept.

The brand-new McDonald's restaurant on Belleville Road in Van Buren Township held its ribbon cutting recently with the help of the Belleville Area Chamber of Commerce. From left are Alvis Brigris and children, Gary Marshall, unknown, township clerk Leon Wright, township treasurer Sharry Budd, township trustee Kevin Martin, Rick Landreville and Erik Hite of McDonalds, and chamber president Dinara Strikis.

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Bob Dutko

Photo courtesy of Dell Deaton

Christian radio broadcaster visits Bethlehem Baptist

Dell Deaton
Contributing Writer

On May 17, Bob Dutko of 103.5 FM made a local guest appearance, hosted by Bethlehem Baptist Church. He provided a Christian perspective on news coverage of the ongoing war in Iran, and the role of Bible teachings as applied to involvement by Israel and the United States.

"When I'm in the studio, I don't get to see people," he told the *Independent*. "I get to look at a microphone. This is a chance for me to meet with people, to meet with the Body of Christ, to talk with them. Here in Van Buren Township, this church, this conversation is something important that I can't have if can't go beyond talk radio."

Dutko will lead a three-day retreat this summer at the faith-based Bambi Lake Conference Center in Roscommon, MI. Several families from Bethlehem Baptist plan to attend.

"We invited him into our church to prepare," said founding pastor Aaron Tanap. "It's important to see us when we're in our home community."

"The Bob Dutko Show" is heard weekdays from noon to 4 p.m. on WMUZ radio out of Detroit.

More Letters

St. Jude Thaddeus Novena

To the editor:

May the Sacred Heart of Jesus be adored, glorified, loved, and preserved throughout the world now and forever. Sacred Heart of Jesus, hear our prayer.

St. Thaddeus, worker of miracles, pray for us. St. Thaddeus, helper of the hopeless, pray for us.

Say this prayer nine times a day for nine days. On the ninth day your prayers will be answered. Publication must be promised.

Prayers,
C.P. of Wayne

Independent photo by Rosemary K. Oztman
Gayle Parr and Denise Baker were celebrated at a surprise retirement party in their honor on April 17 at their Belleville Tax and Accounting office, 152 Main St., Belleville. The two have been operating the office for more than 20 years. Both are certified public accountants and they still own the office building that formerly was a movie theater. The current owners, Haven Group CPAs, now operate the business in the same location.



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VAN BUREN
PARKS & RECREATION

VBT

(continued from page 1)

rules on property rights and the person who owns the property has the right to sell to an industrial developer.

McNamara said the township has two big problems, with two-lane roads throughout the township, as well as two freeways, I-94 and I-275, that bring nothing but truck traffic into the township. He said they are trying to duck truck traffic and are avoiding distribution companies and warehouses.

"We have the largest data center in the state here – JP Morgan Chase," he said.

"Nobody seems to know it exists. It's quiet. It's clean."

He said Panattoni developers came along and they thought it was a warehouse they were looking at and they were not excited because the township would end up with more trucking.

"I have to admit when we found out it was a data center, we were kind of happy," he said. "When Facebook hit, our jaws dropped. We didn't realize there was that much problem with data centers in our community. So everybody here was upset. I was upset. A sleepless month..."

"But then we started looking into the

Facebook claims. Frankly, I haven't seen a single solitary, claim against data centers on Facebook that are true. They all are misinformation.

"I'm gonna tell you what we have done. We have listened to you with every, single solitary question. And because we listened, we basically made a stronger, stronger agreement that will be presented later in the meeting."

He said on sound, they actually went to the Google center in New Albany, Ohio, and sent engineers there. He said township people walked the neighborhoods and talked to people and to the schools and they had no problem with sound. But sound monitoring was written into the agreement and if they violate that they lose the tax deal, McNamara said.

He talked about upgrades to the agreement on water and berms and other things and said whatever the township asked for Google gave them.

He finished up his presentation on why he believes this data center is a good idea for this community.

Then, there was a public comment period for items on the agenda. This took about another hour during which 19 people spoke on the data center, most of whom had spoken during the public hearing.

Most of the speakers said they were against the data center, but a handful of men spoke in support of what the center will bring the township.

Representatives of Panattoni and Google gave presentations on the data center that lasted about an hour as board members questioned them on details. Then the votes came.

The motions approved were:

- Establishing Industrial Development District #27 on about 280 acres between Haggerty, Hannan, and I-94 N. Service Drive. The township is given the authority to establish this district by Act. No. 198 of the Michigan Public Acts of 1974, as revised;

- Granting a Real Industrial Facilities Tax Exemption for Google for a 36-month construction period and 12-year tax abatement on real property taxes. Total of Real and Personal costs is \$7,805,724,103. The company shall deliver \$15.4 million to Van Buren Township for township-wide capital projects;

- Granting a Personal Industrial Facilities Tax Exemption for Google;

- Approving a memorandum of understanding between the township and Google, with details about obligations for both the township and Google related

to financial commitments and other contractual items; and

- Approving a development agreement between the township and developer Panattoni for the data center development concerning the phasing of the development and details of the construction. Treasurer Sharry Budd added wording to the basic motion for approval. She said Panattoni will not install any groundwater wells and all the water used and cooling tower blow down will go to pipes to the South Huron Valley Authority, none into the ground. The final language will be addressed by legal counsel She said this was agreed to elsewhere, but she wanted to confirm it in this motion.

At the very beginning of the meeting, a woman called out a question from the audience and supervisor Kevin McNamara warned the crowd that there will be no outbursts during this meeting. He said if that happens, the person may be asked to leave.

Township attorney David F. Greco sat at the board table with the full board, but did not speak during the meeting.

Supervisor McNamara directed trustee Donald Boynton to read the board's conduct policy that had been adopted by the board in 2024. The policy requires people not to speak unless called upon by the chairperson. And speakers must use civil language with no personal attacks, profanity, and anything deemed offensive to others. There also should be no debate with board members. No catcalls, whistling, or clapping. Police officers serve as security officers and those not following the rules may be asked to leave and if they don't they may be escorted out by police, as determined by the chairperson.

As the meeting began, the policy was followed, but then, a man who was late and missed the reading of the policy, started piping up and then others clapped and called out and the rules started unraveling. There was a lot of calling out and clapping heard from the overflow room across the hall.

One woman refused to stop talking after her 3 minutes were up and supervisor McNamara asked her to stop and then when she didn't directed police to escort her out. She kept on talking and screamed when they touched her and escorted her from the room. Later she returned to the meeting room.

This meeting lasted three and a half hours, in contrast to the previous week's planning commission meeting that approved a data

(continued on page 16)



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– Steven Wright

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(734) 697-5600 TFN

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to homeless in Detroit. Drop off at
Bladez's. 601 E. Huron River Dr.
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FOUND

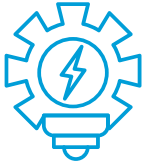
CANE left AT 45545 Bemis during
a yard sale on May 15. Please call
(734) 301-9225 06/04

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GOOGLE AND PANATTONI Investing in Van Buren's Future

LOCAL ECONOMY



\$10M Michigan Energy Impact Fund

Supports local renewable energy initiatives and efficiency programs.

Benefit to Residents:

- Funding home weatherization and community efficiency projects



\$15M Van Buren Investment

Funding for public space revitalization, infrastructure improvements, and community facilities.

Benefit to Residents:

- 100% of this private funding goes to benefit Van Buren residents.
- Funding future recreational amenities.
- Funding township-wide capital projects.



Investment in Education

Funding and resources to local school districts.

Benefit to Residents:

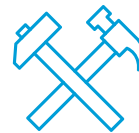
- Ensure students in data center communities are prepared for future careers.
- STEM programming that provide students with tangible, hands-on experiences

EMPLOYMENT



Local Hiring Fairs

Focusing on **hiring local contractors and skilled tradespeople** on the project for initial build and continued operational opportunities.



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1,500+ Peak Construction Jobs

Skilled trade employment opportunities during the build and operational phase, **boosting local trade and commerce.**

Benefit to Residents:

- Quality employment for local residents.
- Influx of economic activity into local industries, food service and more.

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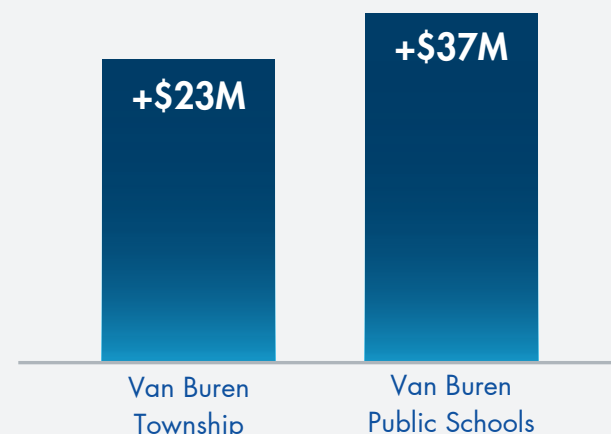
Top Tax Payer

Project Cannoli to become the **single largest contributor to Van Buren's tax base**, ensuring long-term fiscal health for the municipality and its services including funding infrastructure, schools, and municipal operations.

Benefit to Residents:

- Significant tax revenue to Van Buren Township and Van Buren Public Schools to fund facilities and operations.

ESTIMATED TAX REVENUE From Project Cannoli over 13 Years



(continued from page 13)

center electric substation that lasted seven hours.

In other business at the May 19 meeting, the board:

- Approved a motion, added to the agenda during the meeting, to purchase real property. The board had met in closed-door session an hour before the regular meeting to consider the purchase of real property, but no explanation of the site was given. McNamara later said it will be disclosed once the purchase goes through and it will be kept secret at this point to protect the price of the property. He said he couldn't make an offer without board approval;
- Approved the re-appointments of Eileen Parent and Walter Rochowiak to the Water and

Sewer Commission, with terms to expire June 1, 2028;

• Approved a resolution adopting the 2026 tax rate request: allocated millage of 0.8917 and extra voted millage for public safety of 6.3803 for a total of 7.2720 mills. The township's taxable value of real and personal property for 2026 is \$1,599,852,952, so the tax amounts to \$11,634,130;

• Approved the second reading and adoption of an ordinance to update the Ypsilanti Community Utilities Authority Sanitary Sewer Rules as required by the township's agreement with YCUA. It concerns controlling pollutants that might be put into the wastewater. It was explained that the township does not have any industrial properties that discharge into the sewer, but it must update the rules under their agreement. Boynton was not at the board table

for this vote;

• Approved the second reading and adoption of an amendment to the township zoning ordinance regarding temporary land use approvals for firework tents. The administration now has the power to approve firework tents that in the past have been approved and have operated without difficulty. This relieves the fire tent requester from having to appear before the planning commission year after year with the exact request;

• Heard clerk Leon Wright say he moved to the township in 1994 and has spent 18 years

in office. He lives about a quarter mile from the proposed data center. He said there are about 20,000 rooftops in Van Buren Township and the township gets just one mill of taxes for operation. He said it is hard for him to hear all the cat calls and threats. He said he is working for the township and he knows how responsible Google is as a company. He said, "We're all in this together"; and

• Heard McNamara say that he is open to talk to people about their concerns and anyone who wants to talk is welcome to come to his office.

Charter Township of Van Buren Public Notice

CHARTER TOWNSHIP OF VAN BUREN BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING MINUTES -- May 19, 2026

Supervisor McNamara called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Board Room. Present: Supervisor McNamara, Treasurer Budd, Clerk Wright, Trustee Kelley, Trustee Boynton, Trustee Martin, and Trustee Frazier. Others in attendance: Deputy Supervisor Selman, Recording Assistant Beaudry, Director of Public Services Luckett, Assessor Stamper, Director of Municipal Services Akers, DDA Director Coburn and an audience of approximately 150.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE AGENDA: Supervisor McNamara outlined the items appearing on the agenda.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA: Martin moved, Kelley seconded to amend the agenda adding Consent Agenda Item #7: Approval of the purchase of real property. Motion Carried.

Martin moved, Wright moved to adopt the amended agenda, Motion Carried.

ADOPTION OF THE CONSENT AGENDA: Martin moved, Wright seconded to approve the Consent Agenda: Board Meeting Minutes of May 5, 2026, Prepaid List of May 7, 2026, Prepaid List of May 13, 2026, Voucher List of May 19, 2026, Approval of the re-appointments of Eileen Parent and Walter Rochowiak to the Water and Sewer Commission, with terms to expire June 1, 2028, Approval of Resolution 2026-08: 2026 Tax Rate Request, and Approval of the purchase of real property. Motion Carried.

PUBLIC HEARING: Kelley moved, Budd seconded to open the public hearing at 6:06 p.m. to receive comment on: Resolution 2026-09: To establish Industrial Development District #27, Resolution 2026-10: Request for a Real Industrial Facilities Tax Exemption for Google, LLC., and Resolution 2026-11: Request for a Personal Industrial Facilities Tax Exemption for Google, LLC. Motion Carried.

24 members of the public voiced opinions on various data center related topics.

Boynton moved, Kelley seconded to leave the public hearing at 7:16 p.m. Motion Carried.

C O R R E S P O N D E N C E / ANNOUNCEMENTS/PRESENTATIONS: Supervisor McNamara presented information on the data center.

PUBLIC COMMENT (Unfinished and New Business): 18 members of the public voiced opinions on various data center related topics.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Martin moved, Wright seconded to approve the second reading of Ordinance 05-05-26(1) which is an ordinance to update our YCUA

Sanitary Sewer Rules per the requirements of our agreement with YCUA. Roll Call Vote. Yeas: Martin, Kelley, Frazier, Wright, Budd and McNamara. Nays: None. Absent/Excused: Boynton. Motion Carried.

Kelley moved, Budd seconded to approve the second reading of Ordinance 05-05-26(2) which is an amendment to the Van Buren Township Zoning Ordinance regarding Temporary Land Use Approvals for Firework Tents. Roll Call Vote. Yeas: Martin, Boynton, Kelley, Frazier, Wright, Budd and McNamara. Nays: None. Absent/Excused: None. Motion Carried.

Boynton moved, Wright seconded to approve Resolution 2026-09: To establish Industrial Development District #27. Motion Carried.

Boynton moved, Wright seconded to approve Resolution 2026-10: A Real Industrial Facilities Tax Exemption for Google, LLC. Motion Carried.

Wright moved, Boynton seconded to approve Resolution 2026-11: A Personal Industrial Facilities Tax Exemption for Google, LLC. Motion Carried.

Kelley moved, Frazier seconded to approve a Memorandum of Understanding between Van Buren Township and Google. Motion Carried.

Budd moved, Wright seconded to approve a Development Agreement between Van Buren Township and Panattoni for the Data Center Development near Haggerty Road and I-94 with the condition be added that it will be added to the agreement which prohibits the instillation of any groundwater wells and which prohibits the discharge of any domestic sanitary sewer discharge and or cooling tower blow down anywhere besides the Van Buren Township sanitary sewer system and the final language will be addressed by legal counsel. Motion Carried.

REPORTS: None.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS: Audience members spoke on due diligence, housing values and housing appraisals.

BOARD COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS: Treasurer Budd commented on the water agreements made by Google and discussed the data center with members of the public and Supervisor McNamara invited residents to come to his office to discuss anything.

ADJOURNMENT: Boynton moved, Frazier seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:25 p.m. Motion Carried.

Leon Wright, Township Clerk

Kevin McNamara, Supervisor

Published: May 28, 2026

Van Buren Public Schools Public Notice

VAN BUREN PUBLIC SCHOOLS NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED 2026-2027 BUDGET

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that on June 22, 2026, at 7:00 o'clock p.m., at 501 W Columbia Ave, Belleville, Michigan, the Board of Education of Van Buren Public Schools will hold a public hearing to consider the District's proposed 2026-2027 budget.

The Board may not adopt its proposed 2026-2027 budget until after a public hearing. A copy of the proposed 2026-2027 budget, including the proposed property tax millage rate, is available for public inspection during normal business hours at 555 W Columbia Ave, Belleville, Michigan.

THE PROPERTY TAX MILLAGE RATE PROPOSED TO BE LEVIED TO SUPPORT THE PROPOSED BUDGET WILL BE A SUBJECT OF THIS HEARING.

This notice is given by order of the Board of Education.

Darlene Loyer Gerick, Secretary

Published: May 28, 2026



City of Belleville Public Notice



Seeking Applicants City of Belleville Summer Youth Employment Program



The City of Belleville is accepting applications for the 2026 Summer Youth Employment Program.

Applicants must be between the ages of 14 and 24. Individuals younger than 18 years of age, and at least 16 years of age must provide a Work Permit/Age Certificate (CA-6). Individuals younger than 16 years of age must provide a Work Permit/Age Certificate (CA-7). These forms may be obtained through the Belleville High School front office, or online through the State of Michigan.

The applications for Temporary Summer Help are available at City Hall, 330 Charles Street, Belleville or online at www.bellevilleonthelake.com.

The City of Belleville is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

Briana Papin
City Clerk/Treasurer

Publish: May 28, June 4, 11, and 18, 2026

Keystone Charter Academy has no student cell phones on campus

By Rosemary K. Oztman
Independent Editor

Keystone Academy in Sumpter Township has allowed no cellphones on the charter school campus since Jorvanna Drain became principal.

At the May 14 regular meeting of the Keystone board of directors the board was

asked to approve updates to the 2026-27 parent-student handbook to put National Heritage Academies in line with new state law on cellphones in schools.

But, the new rules were less stringent than Keystone's present rules and so there was discussion on the problem.

The board tabled approval of the handbook and also approval of the wireless policy until the June meeting.

In other business at the one-hour-13-minute meeting, the board:

- Learned Keystone earned a \$2,645 award from Bay Mills Community College, its charter authorizer, for achievement. The funds are to be used in celebrations of their achievements;
- Held a public hearing on the 2026-27

budget proposal and then approved the proposal;

- As part of the annual meeting action items, reelected the same slate of present officers, appointed the FOIA officer, board legal counsel, AHERA contact, Title VI, Title IX, and Section 504 contacts, and approved the school safety commission liaison;
- Approved the Presque Isle Notice of Non-Renewal Letter, since NHA is taking over background checks of employees. The adjoining motion to make principal Drain the signer of the LASO, is being held in abeyance until the board president, who presently works as a human resources director can check on a detail. The board gave her authority to make a final decision

on their behalf by the May 30 deadline;

• Learned Diane Patton and Kim Bradley are finalists for NHA's Excellence in Teaching Award for the 2024-25 school year. They were chosen from those teaching in the 100 NHA schools. Also, 38 students were inducted into the National Junior Honor Society;

• Was informed that eighth-grade promotion is June 4, Kinder promotion is June 5, and the eighth grade clap out is June 5.

The new NHA representative DeAmo Murphy was present only through his cell phone since he was reportedly stuck in traffic on the way to the meeting.

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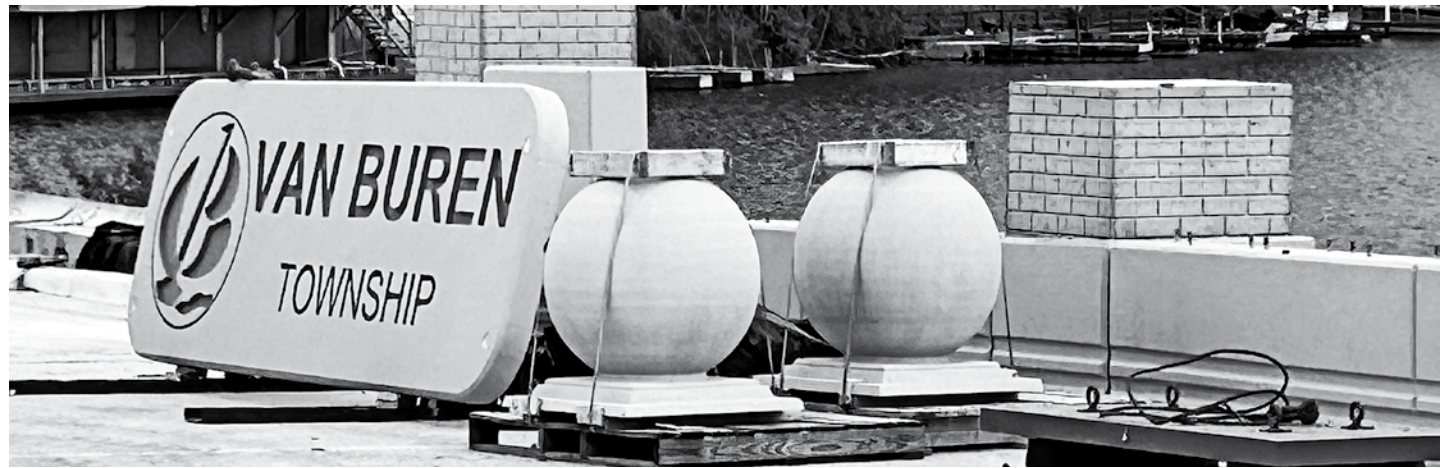


Photo courtesy of Don Sherman

The sign that will go up on the Denton Road Bridge was recently delivered and painted. The decorative balls also were delivered. They match the balls on the Belleville Road Bridge.

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It is the responsibility of both the classified seller and buyer to ensure they understand all laws applicable to private gun sales in Michigan. The *Belleville-Area Independent* is not responsible for the legal compliance of classified buyers and sellers.

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Sumpter Township Police Dispatch Log

(continued from page 18)

1612 – civil matter, 44000 bl. Willis Rd.
1700 – welfare check, 44000 bl. Dunn Rd.
1903 – fire dept. assist, Bemis Rd./Elwell Rd.
2159 – suspicious vehicle, Lohr Rd. / Timber Creek Dr.

Wednesday, May 20:

0004 – fire dept. assist, 42000 bl. Willis Rd.
0729 – L3504 – detail – SU, 47000 bl. Bemis Rd.
0900 – damage to property, Birch Dr.
0903 – fire dept. assist, 43000 bl. Bemis Rd.
1117 – mental health call, 44000 bl. Bemis Rd.
1120 – follow-up investigation, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.

1237 – follow-up investigation, 44000 bl. Bemis Rd.
1437 – welfare check, Wayside Dr.
1513 – welfare check, 28000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
1523 – welfare check, 46000 bl. Kozma Rd.
1532 – welfare check, 21000 bl. Fenster Ave.
1658 – family trouble, 44000 bl. Bemis Rd.
1717 – mental health call, 21000 bl. Fenster Ave.
1737 – welfare check, 44000 bl. Dunn Rd.
1803 – citizen assist, 44000 bl. Clay Rd.
1906 – welfare check, California St.
2015 – neighbor dispute, Texas St.
2048 – follow-up investigation, 44000 bl. Bemis Rd.
2126 – follow-up investigation, 44000 bl. Bemis Rd.
2216 – follow-up investigation, 44000 bl. Bemis Rd.

Thursday, May 21:

0930 – fire dept. assist, 41000 bl. Willow Rd.
1027 – animal complaint, 42000 bl. Bemis Rd.
1035 – fire dept. assist, 42000 bl. Bemis Rd.
1049 – misc. investigation, 44000 bl. Bemis Rd.
1050 – 911 hangup, 49000 bl. Willis Rd.
1104 – welfare check, Colorado St.
1134 – suspicious circumstance, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
1449 – family trouble, Stonecrest Dr.
1723 – suspicious vehicle, Sherwood Rd. / Judd Rd.
1757 – mental health call, Stonecrest Dr.
2122 – citizen assist, 21000 bl. Haggerty Rd.
2143 – suspicious circumstance, Birch Dr.
2347 – noise complaint, 43000 bl. Judd Rd.

Friday, May 22:

0339 – mental health call, Oregon St.
0935 – malicious destruction of property report, Edgewood Dr.
1040 – animal complaint, Rustic Ln.
1406 – assault, Birch Dr. / Hickory Dr.
1412 – suspicious person, Martha's Dr./Bemis Rd.
1458 – suspicious person, 43000 bl. Willis Ct.
1533 – suspicious circumstance, Washington St.
1538 – assault, 19000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
1940 – juvenile matter, Carriage Ln.
1943 – citizen assist, 23000 bl. Sumpter Rd.
2132 – civil matter, 20000 bl. Sherwood Rd.
2155 – suspicious circumstance, Mulberry
2253 – suspicious circumstance, Edgewood Dr.

Saturday, May 23:

0020 – 911 hangup, 48000 bl. Sully Dr.
0248 – assault, 20000 bl. Sherwood Rd.
1005 – welfare check, Magnolia Dr.
1044 – follow-up investigation, Oregon St.

1051 – follow-up investigation, Texas St.

1501 – follow-up investigation, out of township

1533 – animal complaint, 46000 bl. Traskos Dr.

1645 – welfare check, Brookview Dr.

1724 – fire dept. assist, Wayside Dr.

Also on this week's log are 142 patrol checks, 84 traffic stops, and eight misc. details.

Musings

By Janet Millard
Independent
Advertising Director



June 6 at 10 a.m. brings the Frank Rochowiak first-annual Tractor & Semitruck Show at the Wayne County Fairgrounds on Beck Road. What a tribute to a great guy who spent years making the fairgrounds bigger and better. Carnival rides have been added so bring the whole family for a day of fun.

Oh my, with all the activity in Van Buren Township with the data center and building over the golf course, it has really overshadowed the toxic shipments into the landfill. With that said, let me remind you who Michigan Against Atomic Waste is. MAAW is an organization dedicated to preventing the disposal of radioactive & hazardous waste in Michigan.

In case you missed the ad a few weeks ago, MAAW is having a Euchre fun night at Van Buren Eagles Hall on Saturday, May 30, from 4 to 11 p.m. There will be a pork chop dinner until 6:30 p.m. for only \$20. Check-in for Euchre at 6 p.m. for a suggested donation of \$40 with games ending around 9 p.m. There will be raffle baskets and gift cards, a cash bar and snacks available. For questions email: maawfundraiser@gmail.com. Better yet just show up and enjoy the evening knowing that it is for a good cause.

Do you have an item you would like to see in this column? Call Janet Millard at (734) 699-9020.

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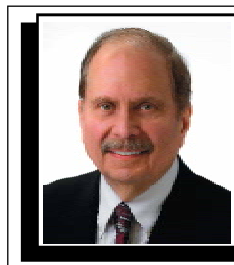
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11112 JACKSON VAN, BUREN TOWNSHIP

1163 SQUARE FOOT BRICK RANCH with 3 bedrooms plus dining area. Many Updates include Central Air, Vinyl Windows, Flooring, Deck, Gutters and Driveway. 209,000



48620 WEAR, SUMPTER TOWNSHIP

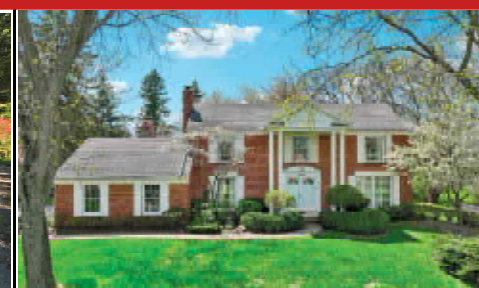
BEAUTY WORTH CELEBRATING 3 Bedrooms, 2 Baths (One New) 1,690 Sq Ft on 1.3 Acres. Deck and Large Pole Barn room for a workshop and more. Extra Clean \$312,900



PENDING

28503 MARGARET LN, HURON TOWNSHIP

THIS BRICK HOME HAS IT ALL 3,828 Total Square Feet of finished living space, 4 Bedrooms, 3 Baths, Hot Tub, 14x27 Family Room, 2 + 1 Car Garages .85 Acres Short Sale \$385,000



4142 WATERWHEEL LANE, BLOOMFIELD HILLS

FEATURES 4 BEDROOMS, 2 1/2 baths, Family room with fireplace large basement with over 2,500 sq ft. Secluded back yard and patio. Bloomfield Hills Schools. \$675,000



1418 HANFORD, LINCOLN PARK

Income Property to Fix or Flip. 2 Bedrooms, 1 Bath, Large Yard, Covered Porch. Being sold as is with buyer assuming city certs, and repairs. \$85,000 Cash or owner financed.



10324 SWAN LAKE, YPSILANTI

JUST LIKE NEW 3 Bedroom 2 Bath Condo. 2022 Construction. High end options include a composite deck, gutter guard system, premium shutters. \$299,000



29515 CHARLES, ROMULUS

IT'S LOADED WITH 4 BEDROOMS, 2 Baths, 1,647 Square Feet, Fireplace, Deck and More. On 1/2 Acre with Huge Garage. 1996 Construction Just \$200,000



12950 HAGGERTY VAN BUREN TOWNSHIP

FOR LEASE Zoned M-2 for many uses. Best location with 16,800 SqFt For Lease. 20 Foot Ceilings, Large Offices Huge Work Area. Close to I-94 & I-275. \$6,900. Mo Triple Net

84 ACRES OAKVILLE WALTZ ASH TOWNSHIP-MONROE COUNTY. 1268 FRONTAGE ZONED LIGHT INDUSTRIAL AND RESIDENTIAL. NEAR I-275 Great Investment \$795,000

GRANT ROMULUS 1.8 AC LT IND \$19,000
GRANT ROMULUS 4.18 AC CORNER LOT, LIGHT INDUSTRIAL \$19,000

SHERWOOD \$ SOLD cres \$60,000

GRANT & WAHRMAN 4 ACRES LT INDUSTRIAL NEAR METRO AIRPORT \$250,000
WILLIS & MARTINSVILLE 1.64 AC PAVED RD WATER & SEWER AT STREET \$65,000

MARIO ANN COURT ROMULUS Finest Private Area in Romulus. Perfect location with City Water and Sewer at the Street. \$33,000
VAC BOHN, SUMPTER TP 1 Acre \$35,000

***** BELLEVILLE LAKEFRONT ***** 2405 RAWSONVILLE 99X328 .74 AC \$99,900
NORTHLINE ROMULUS 1.1 ACRES 208 FT FRONTAGE LT INDUSTRIAL ZON \$59,900



ATCHINSON



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